

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The Board of the Washington Fire Commissioners Association held a regular meeting on Saturday, April 25, 2009, at the convention center in Yakima, Washington.

Members present: President Bill Gates, Vice President Robert Skaggs, Secretary-Treasurer Les Riel, Region 1 Director Sharon Colby, Region 2 Director Emilio Buttice, Region 3 Director Dennis Bjork, Region 4 Director Ken Eakin, Region 5 Director Steve Lich, Region 6 Director Jim Farrell, Region 7 Alternate Verne Pierson, Region 8 Director Keith Merritt, Region 9 Director Mick McKinley and Immediate Past President Joe Dawson.

Also present: Gene Carmody (Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue), Jack Hensley (Spokane 4), Roger Ferris, Sandy Babcock, Jim Lux and Nora Eyllenfeldt (WFCA).

Following a presentation by representatives of the Yakima Visitors' & Convention Bureau and various Yakima-area hotels, President Gates called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Board members and guests proceeded with introductions.

Robert Skaggs moved and it was seconded to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried.**

Les Riel moved and it was seconded to approve the January 24, 2009 Board meeting minutes. **Motion carried.**

Les Riel gave the Secretary-Treasurer's report reviewing first quarter finances, noting the WFCA budget is on target to date. Commissioner Riel stated the Budget Committee met in March to discuss possible changes to the dues structure; the committee is reviewing proposals and will meet again prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Board. Steve Lich moved and it was seconded to approve the WFCA's January-March 2009 disbursements, check numbers 22310 through 22429, totaling \$154,086.16. **Motion carried.** President Gates accepted the financial report.

Jack Hensley presented the Health Care Committee's report. The committee has begun work on the 2010 plan year and will meet in June and July to further review benefits and rates. Bob Skaggs stated he attended yesterday's meeting and the committee is doing an excellent job.

Jim Lux gave the Health Care Manager's report stating the program had a first quarter loss ratio of 82.7%. Mr. Lux discussed potential new enrollments as well as federal issues that may have some impact on self-funded programs.

Roger Ferris presented the Health Care Investment Officer's report reviewing first quarter finances. Mr. Ferris stated legislation was passed requiring that all public deposits be 100% collateralized, the result of which will significantly reduce interest income for WFCA health care reserves. Jim Farrell moved and it was seconded to direct Roger Ferris to write a letter to the state treasurer outlining WFCA concerns about this matter. **Motion carried.**

President Gates accepted the Health Care Manager and Investment Officer's reports.

Roger Ferris presented correspondence from Grant County FPD 3 Secretary Carmen Weber requesting WFCA assistance in coordinating a workshop on the basic accounting reporting system. Bob Skaggs moved and it was seconded to direct Roger Ferris to move forward with scheduling this class. **Motion carried.** Mick McKinley asked that Mr. Ferris notify the Washington Fire Chiefs about this workshop.

Roger Ferris presented correspondence from King County Fire Commissioners Association regarding decentralized training. It was noted the Board previously took a neutral position on this issue but it will likely resurface in 2011.

Roger Ferris referred to email correspondence from Mick McKinley regarding potential shortfalls in assessed values as a result of the troubled economy, and his concerns with the subsequent effect on fire district budgets.

Roger Ferris stated membership dues are being paid at a steady pace and there has been a positive response to the rate adjustments. Mr. Ferris will provide the Board with an updated membership list in June.

Roger Ferris stated 2009 Saturday Seminar Series attendance has been very good and pre-registrations are tracking well for Chelan.

Roger Ferris commended Jim Lux for the great job he is doing as WFCA Health Care Manager.

President Gates accepted the Executive Secretary's report.

Roger Ferris presented the legislative report stating the annexation and bid limits bills passed and the impact fee measure lost on the Senate floor calendar (bill will be reintroduced next year).

Bill Gates reported that he asked Dean Shelton, WFCA Representative on the Fire Protection Policy Board, if he would like Board input on any issues that have come before the Policy Board. Commissioner Shelton sent a document regarding standardized testing and requested Board input on switching from a weighted to raw score process.

Keith Merritt gave the Fire Service Leadership Forum report stating the Board for Volunteer Firefighters has created a focus group to discuss their standards in the WAC process.

Bob Skaggs reported on the Residential Sprinkler Coalition, noting the coalition has put together a public service announcement regarding the need for residential sprinklers. Commissioner Skaggs discussed an issue in his district in which five homes (built too close together without fire protection) suffered damage in a single fire; his Board of Commissioners brought this matter before the Pierce County Council which implemented a study group to look into preventing this type of unfortunate situation in the future.

Steve Lich stated his E911 Advisory Committee report was included in the Board packets.

The Board discussed a letter from Richard Kistler (Thurston 7) regarding the Board for Volunteer Firefighters' Administrative Stakeholders group.

President Gates accepted the Legislative, Leadership Forum and E911 Advisory Committee reports.

The Board recessed for lunch at 11:45 a.m. The Board reconvened at 12:45 p.m.

Bob Skaggs moved and it was seconded to authorize Roger Ferris to enter into negotiations with the convention center and surrounding hotels for the purpose of holding the 2012 WFCA conference in Yakima. **Motion carried.**

Roger Ferris presented the James R. Larson Forum Building report reviewing finances. Regular maintenance continues and a solid capital return is expected this summer. Mr. Ferris noted the Board for Volunteer Firefighters' office will get new carpet this year. President Gates accepted the Forum report.

After discussion, Dennis Bjork moved and it was seconded to set the 2009 conference pre-registration fee at \$245. **Motion carried.** This represents a \$10 increase over last year.

Roger Ferris referred to the results of a survey in which the WFCMA membership was asked to provide input on the current Management Excellence Award Program. It appears there is a consensus that changes should be made but there is not a consensus on what those changes should be. This will be a continuing topic of discussion for possible revision in 2010.

Mick McKinley discussed declining assessed values and the potential impact this will have on fire district revenues and ultimately, operations.

President Gates brought up the WFCMA Strategic Plan suggesting the Board review a portion of it at each meeting. Roger Ferris responded that he will provide a report at the next Board meeting on objectives that have been met.

President Gates brought up the region boundary review which is mandated in the bylaws to occur in the years ending in 0 and 5; he has asked Joe Dawson to study this issue and report back to the Board in October.

Regional directors reported on activities within their respective regions.

The Board directed Roger Ferris to write a letter to the Pierce County Board of Commissioners supporting Graham Fire & Rescue and the Pierce County Commissioners and Chiefs in their continuing efforts to challenge the county's building code that proposes, among other things, to reduce residential streets from 30 to 20 feet wide, which is impractical for response vehicles.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.